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On Human Depravity.

CHRIST was the most benevolent person that ever appeared upon earth. He went about doing good, and expressing his benevolence to men of every character and condition. He rejoiced with them that rejoiced; he mourned with them that mourned; and wept with them that wept. He fed the hungry; he healed the sick; he removed the disorders of the eye, of the ear, and of the understanding; he raised the dead to life; and wherever he went, he preached the glad tidings of salvation to all who would hear him. He never gave an unnecessary pain to an individual of mankind. But yet he said many things, which were extremely disagreeable to those who heard him preach and converse. Their displeasure increased to such a degree of malignity, that they attempted to stone him, to push him from a precipice, and to take

away his life.—All this Christ foreknew and foretold. Why then did he lay open the hearts of sinners so fully and plainly? No other reason can be given but the importance of doing it. He saw the importance of telling sinners how they appeared to his heart-searching eye, notwithstanding all their external beauty and excellence. He acknowledged that they paid tithes of mint, and anise and cummin; that they made clean the outside of the cup and the platter; that they appeared beautiful without; that they built the tombs of the prophets and garnished the sepulchres of the righteous. Yet he addressed these externally fair and amiable persons, in this plain and pointed language: "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" Would the kind, compassionate, benevolent Redeemer have represented the character of sinners in this light merely to irritate and give

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pain to their minds? Would he have disclosed their real inward feelings, had it not been a matter of real necessity and importance? And could he, who knew all things, be under any misapprehension of what was, in this case, really necessary and important? If such was the knowledge and benevolence of him, who came to seek and to save them that are lost, then we may safely draw this conclusion from what he said; that it is a matter of importance to exhibit the character of sinners in the clearest light.

It is designed,

I. To endeavor to set the character of sinners in the clearest light: and,

II. To shew the importance of setting it in this light.

I. It is designed to set the character of sinners in the clearest light. Here we shall endeavor to follow an infallible guide, who perfectly knew what is in man. We begin with observing,

1. That sinners are totally destitute of true holiness. Man was originally created in the image of his Maker, which consisted in knowledge, righteousness and true holiness. But this image was lost to all the posterity of Adam by his first offence. They are all now, by nature, destitute of the moral image of God, or entirely destitute of the least spark of that love and benevolence, which Adam originally possessed, and which forms the moral beauty and excellence of their great Creator. Our Saviour himself expressly declares to sinners, "I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." This declaration

admits of no dispute. Christ knew sinners better than they knew themselves. Though they thought they loved God, and were his children; yet he knew that they were totally destitute of every holy and benevolent affection. It must be admitted, upon his divine authority, that all sinners, without exception, are wholly destitute of the love of God or true holiness.

2. It belongs to the character of sinners, that they are altogether selfish. Though they are destitute of holy affections, yet they are not destitute of all affections. They love and hate with all their hearts, but both their love and hatred are entirely selfish. There are but two kinds of moral exercises in the universe. These are benevolence and selfishness. God is possessed of benevolent exercises; but his first and great enemy possesses only selfish exercises, and the same exercises fill the hearts of all the enemies of God. All men are naturally under the influence of that self-love which leads them to seek, and desire, and promote their own interest supremely. They are, as the apostle says, "lovers of their own selves." And one who is greater than he, says, "If ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to those of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners to receive as much again." Here Christ represents sinners as altogether sel-

fish. And on another occasion, he plainly told them so. "Jesus answered them and said, verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled." Whatever sinners say, or do, or desire, they are always governed by a selfish heart which is full of evil. They love no person or object, only as that person or object appears disposed or suited to promote their own private good; and they hate no person or object, only as that person or object, appears disposed or suited to oppose their own private interest or happiness. Being totally destitute of pure, disinterested benevolence, they are always actuated by selfishness. This leads me to observe,

3. That their selfishness is perfectly malignant in its nature and tendency. Selfishness is, in its very nature and tendency, diametrically opposite to benevolence. A selfish desire is always opposed to a benevolent desire. And a selfish man is opposed to the character of a benevolent man. So says Solomon, "An unjust man is an abomination to the just: and he that is upright in the way is an abomination to the wicked." Those who are under the sole influence of selfishness, and desire and seek their own good solely, must be opposed to every person and object, that stands in the way of their sole and supreme object. It is the dictate of reason, that the selfishness of sinners must be, in its nature and tendency, perfectly malignant. And this was the repeated declaration of Christ upon

this subject. He calls the best of sinners by appellations, which denote the highest degree of malignity. "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers." Again, "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Other inspired writers give the same representation of the malignity of the selfish heart. When John the baptist saw many of the Pharisees and scribes come to his baptism, he said unto them, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come!"

The apostle Paul says, "The carnal mind is enmity against God; not subject to his law nor indeed can be." This enmity he describes in lively colors, and ascribes to the native character of both Jews and Gentiles. "What then, are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin. As it is written, there is none righteous, no not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable: there is none that doeth good, no not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes." Here the total

selfishness of sinners is strongly pointed out, in its malignant nature and tendency. So it is in the third chapter of the second epistle to Timothy. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false-accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, high minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." The nature and tendency of selfishness is to produce all these malignant effects. The most malignant feelings and conduct naturally flow from selfishness. This has been the primary source of the greatest wickedness, that has ever been committed, in any part of the universe. It was selfishness that prompted Satan to rebel against God in heaven, and to spread sin and misery through the world. It was selfishness, that prompted Cain to kill Abel, Judas to betray Christ, and the Jews to put him to death. It is selfishness, that makes men serpents and a generation of vipers. Neither serpents nor vipers will show their malignity when they have no opportunity or provocation. But this is no evidence that they have no native malignity. So sinners will not show their malignity when they have no opportunity or provocation. But this is no evidence that they have no selfishness nor malignity. It is only when their views, designs and interests are touched, that they will feel and express their malignity.

But still it is true, that they are by nature perfectly selfish and malignant. We must add,

4. That the malignity or total depravity of sinners is so great as to deserve everlasting punishment. So Christ plainly intimates, when he says, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell." Sinners as really deserve eternal punishment for the malignity of their hearts, as he who goes about, as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Our Saviour declares, that they are his children and possess his spirit. And this being true, who can doubt whether they deserve his doom? They are as destitute of holiness, as entirely selfish, and as perfectly malignant, as he is. And they would, if they had equal power, and were placed under similar circumstances, do as much to oppose God, and destroy the good of the universe, as he ever has done or can do. Hence they as really deserve, for their malignity and selfishness, the damnation of hell, as any of those malignant spirits who are now suffering that eternal punishment. And if any who are now in their sins, should die before their native enmity or malignity is removed, they must perish for ever. Accordingly, Christ has plainly told the impenitent, that he shall doom them to the punishment, prepared for the devil and his angels. In this light is the character of sinners delineated by the Saviour of the world, who perfectly knew all the feelings of their hearts. They are unholy, selfish, malignant, and deserving the dam-

nation of hell. These dreadful traits are to be found in the character of every sinner on the face of the earth. They are all totally sinful and guilty. We now proceed,

II. To show the importance of exhibiting the character of sinners in such a clear light. Our Saviour in his day saw the importance of doing this, and did do it, though extremely displeasing to sinners. And there is, undoubtedly, the same importance of doing this now, that there was, while Christ lived and preached the gospel, on earth. For,

1. Without being made acquainted with the total corruption of their hearts, sinners cannot understand the gospel scheme of salvation. This is founded on the guilt and ill-desert of mankind, and the wisdom and propriety of it cannot be understood, while total depravity is out of view. While Christ was upon earth, he found it extremely difficult to make men understand the gospel which he preached, and the difficulty lay in their good opinion of themselves. They thought they were whole and had no need of a physician. He therefore took great pains to lead them into the nature and design of the gospel. He gave them a clear, concise and comprehensive account of it, in the third chapter of John. "No man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in

him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish but have everlasting life."

Here our Saviour represents the gospel as taking its rise from the guilty and perishing state of mankind. God so loved a perishing world, as to give his Son to die for their salvation. But while the world are unacquainted with the plague of their own hearts, they can see no beauty in Christ or wisdom in the gospel. To this cause the apostle ascribes the disgust and contempt with which the Jews and Gentiles treated the gospel.

"But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness." It is impossible to understand the great work of redemption, even in speculation, without a speculative belief of the total depravity and ill-desert of all for whom Christ died. For why should one die for all unless all were dead? Why should the Lord of glory veil his divinity with humanity, and submit to all the sufferings he endured before and during his dying hour, if sinners were not serpents, a generation of vipers, who deserved the damnation of hell? It is a clear knowledge of the character of sinners, that is a key to the gospel, which unlocks the great mystery of man's redemption, through the death and atonement of the divine Redeemer. Hence it is so important to make men see their real character by nature.

2. It is no less necessary to lay open the corruption and malignity of the human heart, in the

clearest light, in order to make men feel their need of the gospel. There are multitudes who believe in speculation the depravity of sinners, and hence understand the gospel in speculation ; and yet remain insensible of their own perishing need of the salvation, offered to them in the gospel. It is necessary to make men feel, as well as believe, that they have not the love of God in them ; that their hearts are full of evil, and fully set in them to do evil ; and that they are enemies to all righteousness ; yea, that they are serpents and a generation of vipers. It is this character, which renders them deserving the damnation of hell ; and whenever they feel this, they will feel their need of that grace and mercy which the gospel exhibits and tenders to their acceptance. Thus the self-condemned publican felt, when he cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Thus the prodigal son felt, when he came to himself and knew himself and sincerely resolved, "I will arise and go unto my father and say unto him, father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." And thus three thousand felt, when they were pricked to the heart, with a sense of their guilt, and anxiously cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" When sinners are brought to feel their total depravity of heart, and what they justly deserve for their opposition to God and to all good, they feel their need of just such a Saviour as God has provided, and just such a salvation as he has freely offered in the gospel.

Hence it is of the utmost importance to bring them to such a sense of their perishing condition, by clearly and fully laying open the desperate wickedness of their hearts. Besides,

3. It is only in the realizing view of the corruption of their hearts, and their just desert of everlasting destruction, that they can cordially embrace the gospel. They must see and love that divine justice, which condemns them, before they can accept of that divine mercy which is sovereign, and which is never bestowed upon any but the self-despairing. They must accept the punishment of their iniquities, before they can accept the grace of forgiveness. Though sinners may fear destruction ever so much, and though they may ever so much desire to be delivered from it ; yet they cannot accept forgiveness from God, until they have forgiven God for condemning them to eternal death. And they cannot forgive God for this, until they pass the same condemnation upon themselves, and really feel, what the penitent malefactor felt and expressed, when he said to his fellow malefactor, who railed on the suffering Saviour, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly : for we receive the due reward of our deeds." Without such a cordial self-condemnation, no person in the world can really accept of forgiving grace. Christ came to save those whom God had condemned, but none will come to him for salvation, until they condemn themselves, and cordially approve of God for con-

demning them. This shows the infinite importance of teaching sinners, that they are so corrupt, and so guilty, as to deserve the damnation of hell. For though they hear the gospel, they will not understand it; and though they understand it, they will not feel their need of it; and though they feel their need of it, they will not cordially embrace it, unless they see and feel themselves to be, what Christ has said they are, serpents, and a generation of vipers, deserving the damnation of hell.

AND.

On the Guilt of Sinners.

THE psalmist was a man after God's own heart. He possessed pure, disinterested benevolence. In his addresses to the throne of divine grace, he expressed the genuine feelings of his heart. On a certain occasion, with peculiar solemnity and tenderness, he thus addresses the throne of grace: "Unto thee will I cry, O Lord my rock; be not silent to me; lest if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down to the pit. Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee, when I lift up my hands towards thy holy oracle, draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity." And to manifest the sincerity of his request, he proceeds to say, "Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavors: give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert." He had asked

God not to draw him away with the wicked, or to cast his future and final lot among them. For they appeared so odious to him, and so deserving of the marks of divine displeasure, that he could not only approve of their being punished, but could sincerely desire, that God would punish them according to their deserts, for the sake of displaying his own glory, and promoting the good of his moral kingdom. This petition of David is an expression of true benevolence, and the language of every sincere friend of God. All true saints have the same sense of the ill-desert of sinners, and the same sense of the propriety of God's glorifying himself, by giving them the due reward of their deeds. From these observations we may justly draw the general conclusion,

That good men desire God to punish finally impenitent sinners according to their desert. To illustrate this sentiment it is proposed,

I. To show why impenitent sinners deserve to be punished. In the words of the psalmist quoted above, in describing the character of sinners, three things are mentioned; their deeds, their works, and their endeavors. But every one knows that there is no criminality, and consequently no ill-desert in mere external actions. If by deeds and works, external actions are meant, simply considered, they have no criminality or ill-desert. This leads us to conclude, the ill-desert consists in something different from their works or deeds, or mere external actions. And the words of the psalmist plainly suggest the only

ground of their ill-desert. "Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavors." Their guilt lies in their endeavors, or their intentions to do evil. All sin consists in selfishness, and all selfishness lies in the heart. The heart is the seat of sin, and a sinful heart consists in sinful desires, intentions, or affections. When men desire, or endeavor, or intend to do evil, they are really guilty, and their guilt is the ground of their desert of punishment. It is the dictate of common sense, that no man deserves to be punished for his conduct, who had no ill intention or design in it. And it is equally the dictate of common sense, that any man deserves to be punished, when he has intended or endeavored to do wrong. Hence the only reason why sinners deserve to be punished is their intention, design or endeavor to do wrong. Their hearts are totally corrupt. They have not a single holy or benevolent affection. All their voluntary exercises are selfish and criminal. God himself has said, "that every imagination of the thought of their heart is only evil continually." These voluntary thoughts, imaginations, intentions, designs and endeavors render them justly deserving of punishment. Their hearts are full of moral evil, and it is the nature of moral evil to deserve natural. Sin and guilt are necessarily and inseparably connected. Of this all sinners are conscious. Whenever they are sensible of sinning, they are equally sensible of deserving punishment. Joseph's

brethren in selling him, and Judas in selling Christ, were sensible they had sinned.

And the sense of sin gave them a sense of guilt. They were inwardly compelled to acknowledge, that they deserved to be punished. Having thus shown that the ill-desert of sinners consists in their ill intentions and designs, we proceed,

II. To show that some sinners deserve more punishment than others.

This is plainly implied in the following words of the psalmist, "Give them according to their deeds, according to their endeavors, after the work of their hands, render them their desert." All these phrases naturally suggest the idea, that some sinners may be more ill-deserving than others. And this naturally follows from what has been said under the first head. If ill-desert is founded in the ill-intention or design of sinners; then some may have greater ill-desert than others. It is evident, one sinner may have a more selfish or malevolent design than another, and of course, may be more ill-deserving than another. Though all the intentions and designs of sinners are really selfish and sinful; yet some may design to do much more evil than others. One may design to take away a man's property; another may design to take away a man's life; and another may design to destroy a nation. These are all bad designs; yet the second is worse than the first, and the third is worse than the second. Cain was more criminal than Achan, and Pharaoh was more criminal than Cain. It does

not appear, that Achan meant to destroy any man's life, but Cain meant to destroy the life of his brother, and Pharaoh meant to destroy the lives of a whole nation. Ill-desert is always in exact proportion to the ill-design of the agent, and the ill-design of the agent is always in proportion to the magnitude of the evil, which he meant to do. I know many suppose, that ill-desert is to be measured by the strength of an ill-intention, and by its tendency to do evil. But neither of these is the proper measure of ill-desert. The vigor, violence, or strength of the intention is not. For it is as criminal to kill a man in cool blood, as in a violent passion; yea, it is more criminal to kill a man from a cool, deliberate intention to take away his life, than it is to kill him under the influence of a sudden and violent intention of revenge. This is the dictate of common sense, and the decision of the law of the land. Cool, premeditated acts of killing are denominated murder, while violent acts of killing are called man-slaughter. And there is a just foundation for this distinction. The man, who kills another from a cool, deliberate intention, has more time and opportunity to view the act in its nature and dreadful consequences, than the man who kills another suddenly, and without time for consideration. The strength or violence, therefore, of any sinful intention, design, or endeavor, does not aggravate, but rather extenuate, the criminality and ill-desert of it. Indeed, the badness of any intention does not at all depend upon the strength, or

weakness of the affection. Nor does the badness of the intention depend upon its tendency to do evil, any further than the tendency was foreseen. Many imagine, that every sinful exercise of the heart is infinitely sinful and ill-deserving, because it tends to do infinite mischief, and would do infinite mischief, were it not for a divine restraint. But granting here, what might be questioned, that every sin has a natural tendency to do infinite mischief, if it were not restrained; yet no man can be reasonably accountable for the bad tendency of his intention or action, any further than he foresaw its tendency to do mischief. If any sinner were accountable for all the consequences of his sinful actions, he could not so much as conjecture the degree of guilt or ill-desert, chargeable to his account. It must be supposed, therefore, that the sinner's guilt is only in proportion to the evil he intends to do, and not in proportion to the evil he may actually do, or could have done, if the evil tendency of his conduct had not been restrained. This may be illustrated by a striking instance of criminality recorded in scripture. You remember that when David fled from Saul, he went to Nob, to Abimelech the priest, and by criminal deception, induced him to give him the shew-bread, and the sword of Goliath. This act was followed with the most serious and fatal consequences. For when Saul was informed of it, he sent and destroyed four-score and five priests of the Lord. Now if David did not foresee this fatal tendency, and these fatal consequences of his

conduct, what propriety could there be, that he should be chargeable with them? If he had no thought that his deceiving Abimelech, would have the least tendency to destroy him and all his father's house, how could he be guilty of murdering Abimelech and all his father's house? David's guilt could not extend any further than his real intention; nor could he be answerable for the bad tendency of it, any farther than he saw that tendency. The same may be said of every other sinful action. Its guilt cannot extend any farther than the intention of the agent. But so far, guilt always will extend. The intention of an agent is the exact measure of his guilt or ill-desert. And according to this measure, the guilt of one sin may be greater than the guilt of another. Hence there must be a wide difference between the ill-deserts of sinners. Some sinners really intend to do much more evil than others; and the same sinners intend to do more evil at one time than another. The bible represents some sins as much greater than others. Some it represents as gnats, and others as camels; some as motes and others as beams; and some as pence, others as pounds. Our Saviour always taught, that men's sins are great in proportion to the light they resist; which is in other words, in proportion to the evil they intend to do. He said, the servant, who does evil contrary to the known will of his master, is more guilty and ill-deserving, than the servant, who does evil without knowing his master's will. He said, "this is the

condemnation, that light has come into the world, and men choose darkness rather than light." He said, "if he had not come and spoken to the Jews, they had had comparatively no sin." He told Pilate, that "he who had delivered him unto him, had the greater sin;" meaning probably Caiaphas the high-priest. Though Pilate was guilty in condemning Christ, yet he was not so guilty as Caiaphas, who was a Jew and a teacher in Israel, and might have known Christ to be the Son of God and the true Messiah. Caiaphas had more light than Pilate, and this rendered his guilt much greater than Pilate's. Pilate intended to crucify Christ to please the people; but Caiaphas intended to get Christ crucified, to prevent the spread of divine truth. Caiaphas had a worse intention than Pilate, and therefore his guilt was greater in proportion to the wickedness of his endeavors. Absalom's guilt was in proportion to his intention, which was, to destroy his father, and usurp his throne. Herod's guilt was in proportion to his intention, which was, to destroy all the children in Bethlem, under two years old. And Paul's guilt was in proportion to his intention, which was, to destroy the Christian church. Thus, it appears to be agreeable to the dictates of scripture and reason, that some sinners deserve to be punished more than others; because they actually commit greater sins than others. Some intend to do more evil than others, and their guilt and ill-desert is, therefore, greater than the ill-desert of others.

The next thing is,

III. To show what is implied in God's punishing finally impenitent sinners according to their deserts. We have shown, that all sinners are guilty and ill-deserving, though some are more so, than others. The inquiry now is, what is implied in God's "rendering to them their deserts." And here we would observe,

1. Punishing them according to the duration of their desert. They deserve to be punished, because they have done evil of design. There is ill-desert necessarily connected with every intention, desire and affection of their hearts. This ill-desert is durable, and will last as long as they exist. And since they are to exist to eternity, their ill-desert will be eternal. When guilt or ill-desert has once existed in the mind of the sinner, it must remain there for ever, unless there is some cause to remove it. But what cause can remove guilt? The atonement of Christ cannot remove it. For notwithstanding Christ has suffered death for every man, and died the just for the unjust; yet impenitent sinners are certainly as guilty and ill-deserving as if Christ had never laid down his life for them; yea, they are unspeakably more guilty than they would have been, if Christ had never made a propitiation for them. Hence it is certain, that the atonement of Christ, cannot take away the guilt of impenitent sinners.

Again, repentance cannot take it away, for they are supposed to be finally impenitent. If it were allowed, that repent-

ance can remove guilt, which is not true; yet those who are to be punished in a future state never will repent. Hence their ill-desert cannot be removed by repentance. The same guilt which they carry into eternity with them, must for ever remain, notwithstanding any alteration in their feelings. They never will have any penitential, godly sorrow for their past sins. Their character will be fixed, and it will be the character of impenitents. Hence their ill-desert can never be removed by repentance. Again, this ill-desert cannot be removed by any temporary punishment. It is not the nature of punishment to take away criminality and ill-desert. Who can conceive, that a guilty person can be punished, until he becomes innocent? But if punishment could take away guilt, then a guilty person might be punished until all his guilt be destroyed, and he be as entirely innocent as if he had never committed a moral evil. What parent ever corrected a child with a view to remove his guilt, and make him innocent of the offence he had committed?—What court of justice ever commanded a criminal to be beaten, with a view to take away his criminality, and restore him to innocence? The design of punishment is not to remove guilt, but to display justice. We cannot conceive, that God by punishing a sinner for ages and ages, or for any limited duration, should remove his guilt, and make him innocent. Now, if neither the atonement of Christ, nor penitence, nor temporary punishment can take away the ill-desert of finally im-

penitent sinners, then it must remain for ever. But if it will remain for ever, then to punish them according to their desert, must be to punish them for ever. The duration of their punishment ought to be in exact proportion to the duration of their guilt; or God ought to punish them as long as they deserve to be punished. Nothing short of this will be a rendering to them their desert. If the guilt of the least sin will continue for ever, then to punish that sin according to its desert, must be to punish it for ever. Hence one thing implied in God's punishing the finally impenitent according to their deserts, is punishing them as long as they deserve to be punished; and that is to all eternity. Nor is this all, for,

2. His punishing the finally impenitent according to their deserts, further implies punishing them in proportion to the degrees of guilt. Some, it appears from what has been said, will have greater degrees of ill-desert than others, and therefore, in order to give those that are lost just recompense of reward, God must inflict greater degrees of misery upon some, than upon others. The guilt of all is the same in duration, and therefore all must be punished for ever, but since the guilt of some is greater, far greater than that of others, the punishment of some must be greater, far greater in degree, than that of others. There appears to be a propriety in God's proportioning the degrees of eternal punishment according to the degrees of guilt in the finally impenitent. And scripture assures us this will be the case in the great day of de-

cision. Our Saviour expressly declares, that it shall be more tolerable for some impenitent sinners, than for others, when they shall receive their final doom. The great design of punishment will thus require God to punish the finally impenitent according to their deserts, which are the same in duration, but different in degree. It becomes God to manifest his full and just displeasure against the finally impenitent, and render to them their deserts. Justice requires, that he should punish them all for ever, and wisdom requires, that he should proportion the degrees of their punishment to the degrees of their guilt. And shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? He certainly will. It only remains to show,

IV. Why good men desire, that God would punish the finally impenitent according to their deserts. It appears from the prayers of good men, that they do desire this. I do not mean the prayers of Christians at this day, who make a practice of imploring God to destroy the man of sin, and his subjects; but I mean the prayers of good men recorded in the bible. David frequently imprecates the final destruction of finally impenitent sinners. I shall repeat only one instance. "Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavors; give them after the work of their hands; render to them their deserts." Elijah, the prophet, desired and prayed for the final ruin of finally impenitent sinners. "Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh inter-

cession to God against Israel." And the spirits of just men made perfect cry to God, to give unto impenitent sinners their desert. John says, "I saw under the altar, the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held; and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood upon them that dwell on the earth?" These passages are sufficient to make it evident, that good men do desire God to punish the finally impenitent according to their deserts. But it is still worthy of our serious enquiry, why good men, who are truly benevolent, desire God to inflict eternal punishments upon any of their fellow creatures. Saints certainly have a clear and awful sense of eternal misery, and yet they desire, that God would inflict it upon those, who are finally impenitent. What good reasons can they have for such a desire? Here I would say,

1. That it is the nature of true benevolence to love justice itself. The justice of God is a truly amiable and glorious attribute of his nature. It is an essential branch of his infinite benevolence. And since saints view the justice of God in this light, they must be pleased to see the displays of it. Finally impenitent sinners will be the proper objects, upon whom to display divine justice. They will for ever deserve to be punished, and therefore divine justice will for ever appear in their eternal punishment. This is a good reason why good men should desire, that a just God

should give a just recompense of reward to all that die impenitent.

2. It is the nature of true love to God, to desire that he may be for ever glorified. But he cannot be for ever glorified in impenitent sinners without punishing them according to their deserts. They deserve eternal punishment, and therefore, God cannot deliver them from it, by annihilation. It does not appear consistent with moral rectitude to put an end to a creature, who deserves to exist forever under the weight of the divine displeasure. Hence God must continue the impenitent in existence for ever. But if he continues them in existence forever, he must either punish them according to their deserts, or else make them happy, contrary to their deserts, and without the atonement of Christ. But he can do neither of these things, consistent with his glory. What must he do then to glorify himself, by the finally impenitent? There is but one thing he can do, to answer this purpose; and that is to punish them according to their deserts. This good men see and feel, and therefore their supreme love to God makes them sincerely desire, that he would render to them their just desert. Besides,

3. There is another good reason, why saints desire, that God would punish the finally impenitent for ever, and that is the general good of the universe. The just punishment of the wicked will for ever tend to promote the holiness and happiness of all holy creatures. Hence, the apostle demands, "what if God, willing to show his wrath

and make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory?" All good men desire the felicity of all holy beings, and must desire that God would take the best way to promote it. Hence, their very benevolence must make them desire God to punish the finally impenitent for ever.

From what has been said, it may be remarked,

1. That since the guilt of sinners essentially and necessarily consists in their intention, design, or endeavor to do evil, neither the purpose nor agency of God will afford any excuse to the finally impenitent. If it be admitted that the divine purpose and efficiency be concerned in the production of moral evil, it will not follow that the nature of moral evil is different from what it would be, if its existence were effected by a different cause.—While the nature of sin remains, the ill-desert of sin remains. No sinner can ever be relieved from the pain, which will arise from a conviction of his depravity and ill-desert, however clearly he may perceive that the purpose and agency of the divine Being were concerned in designing and forming his moral character. The reprobate will, indeed, know that God intended they should for ever be impenitent, and that his agency was concerned in fitting them for destruction. But they will also know that they intended to do what they shall have done,

and that they were active in fitting themselves for destruction. They will know that God was holy, and wise and good in his designs and in his agency in forming their moral characters, and that they were unholy, unwise and sinful in the very intentions and actions which were decreed and effected according to the sovereign and eternal counsels of heaven. The more fully and clearly they see the holiness, the wisdom and the goodness of God, as they will be displayed upon themselves, the more thorough and painful will be their sense of their own impurity, folly and sin in fitting themselves for the damnation of hell. They will feel that their own intentions and voluntary exertions render them justly deserving of eternal destruction. Hence they can never find the least covering or excuse for their sins, nor the least argument against the endless punishment, which they will for ever feel, that God ought to inflict, and they ought to suffer.

2. As good men for good reasons desire that God would punish the finally impenitent according to their deserts, they are prepared to rejoice when they shall have a full view of their punishment. According to the scriptures, the righteous will behold the pains and the torments of the wicked in hell. And they will greatly rejoice when God shall show his wrath, and make his power known upon the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. But their joy will not arise from ignorance nor malevolence. For their views of the divine purpose and agency in the destruction of the rep-

robate, and of their characters, and ill-desert, and of the effects which will be produced by their punishment, will be very clear, and have no mixture of error. Nor will they ever feel the least emotion of ill-will against their impenitent fellow creatures.— For they will love them with as much benevolence as they love themselves. The elect will be perfect in their benevolence towards the non-elect. In their highest joys in view of the divine glory, which will shine upon the vessels of wrath; when they see the sin and the woe of their fellow creatures, “they will weep such tears as angels shed.” But from their very benevolence they will rejoice, because there are good reasons why they should be destroyed, and why God should decree and effect their destruction. If the righteous were not benevolent in their rejoicing in view of the destruction of the ungodly, they would be criminal, and a conviction of their criminality would enkindle the flames of hell in their own breasts. But as their knowledge and their love shall increase, their joy will increase in beholding the endless perdition of the reprobate. “The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance.” NAD.



Some Remarks on the Manner of Preaching the Gospel.

MR. EDITOR,

I WAS led to the following remarks by a passage in a letter from the Rev. Samuel Grey, Missionary with the Tus-

caroras, inserted in the Christian's Magazine. The passage is as follows:—"I think the great art of preaching to Indians, lies in reducing the style and sentiments to their capacity: And instead of proving the authenticity of sacred writ by arguments to them abstruse, we are to assume the authority it gives us; bring forward its great truths in the most plain and simple manner; with zeal and fervency urge them home to their consciences, leaving the result in the hands of the great agent of the new covenant."

The truth of the above remark, respecting the best manner of preaching to the heathen, cannot be questioned. May it not also be partially applied to the greater part of hearers, who are civilized and called doctrinal Christians? May it not be applied to the learned as well as to the illiterate? It is well known that an important part of the preacher's business is to instruct men in the first principles of theology and the Christian scheme. If he has nothing didactic in his addresses, he cannot be a useful teacher, nor his people well instructed Christians; but it must be acknowledged, that in many of our sermons, there is much speculative reasoning, which is illy adapted to warm the heart, alarm the conscience, and excite a deep sensibility concerning the things of another world. Many, eminently great and good ministers, have been unsuccessful. Doubtless one reason why infinite wisdom thus determined, was to shew that the power is from the Lord, who can make use of the weakest instruments,

in his purposes of grace on the hearts of the most stubborn sinners. Another reason may be, the speculative and argumentative manner in which they address their hearers. If they address men on the subject of depravity, they learnedly prove the truth, without once saying, "thou art the man; thou art condemned already; and the wrath of God abideth on thee."

The first method is an appeal to reason, and the last to conscience. Reason may be coldly and formally convinced, while neither the heart or conscience is touched; indeed, this class of hearers may be so flattered by their rational belief and a moral life, designed only to obtain the applause of men, as never, with respect to themselves, to be convinced of sin, righteousness and judgment to come, or taste the sweets of unfeigned piety. They may be formalists both in doctrine and practice.

The same preachers may learnedly prove the need of a Saviour, adducing their authorities from the holy scriptures, and correctly point out the offices of Christ in the work of redemption, and never bring their hearers to a solemn trial, whether they have repentance towards God, and faith in Christ. They may never have said to them, "Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" Doubtless there are certain fundamental doctrines on which true and saving religion is built, for we find them abundantly expressed in the holy scriptures; still, in these things, we should not depend too much on speculative

reasoning and demonstration. The sacred writers, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, take many of these things as granted. Moses, in his history of the creation, did not first attempt to prove the being of a God, but he begins, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." I do not find that Paul ever spake more expressly on the subject than this, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead: so that they are without excuse." The sacred writers pre-suppose many things concerning the being of a God, and the state, guilt, and misery of human nature. They do not come forward laboriously to prove there is sin in men, but boldly address them as sinners, under the guilt of sin, and in need of such a Saviour as the gospel offers. They charge them directly with inconsideration, and bondage to sin and the world. They depend on natural sense or conscience to make the application. In whatever natural conscience consists; whether it be a distinct power or faculty which takes truth and applies it to the state of the mind, or whether it be the common power of judging exercised in points of moral good and evil, is immaterial to the present subject. That there is in every man what is commonly called natural conscience, none can deny, for to some degree it hath been felt by all. All allow the being of a God, though many have grossly misconceived his character: all,

even the heathen, have some consciousness of sin, guilt and misery, else they would not repair to means of expiation and prevention as is universal in the world. In every sermon, this consciousness of sin, guilt and accountableness to a superior being or God ought to be solemnly addressed, by which means the hearer becomes a preacher to himself, more powerful than any rational demonstrations whatever, although enforced by proofs from the scripture. A mere jumble of solemn words without instruction, and calculated only to throw the passions into confusion, is equally useless and wrong : Still, this does not justify cold and formal reasoning on subjects of infinite importance. Instruction on doctrinal subjects ought to be communicated in such a form as affects the heart and conscience, and thus the sinner will begin to confess to himself, "I am the man"—and to enquire how shall I escape my miserable state ?

The description of a Moravian missionary (extracted from the authority before named) is full in point to this subject. "For ten years he labored without the conversion of a single soul. He thought that he must prove to them the existence of a God, and the original stain of our natures, before he could preach the peculiar doctrines of the gospel ; and he never could get over this first step ; for they either could not, or would not understand it. At length he saw his error, and the plan of operations was altered. Jesus Christ was preached in simplicity without any preparation. The Greenlanders seem-

ed thoughtful, amazed, and confounded ; their eyes were opened to their lost and ruined state ; the gospel was every where received in love, and proved effectual to the destruction of the kingdom of darkness—numbers came from the borders of the northern ocean to hear the words of life ; and perhaps the greater part of the population of this country has now received the truth." But it will be said these were heathen ! allow it, and what matters that ? Numbers in congregations professedly Christian, have thought little more of their own miserable condition and need of a Saviour than these Greenlanders did, before Christ was displayed in all his dying love to save men from eternal misery. Before men will act under the influence of truth, their consciences must be addressed ; they must be told and made to believe, "ye are sinners ; death, a speedy death is before you, here is an Almighty Saviour, repent, return from your sins to obedience, rely on him, love and obey him, and he will save you from death eternal." I have always observed this manner of addressing Christian congregations to be most successful. While it is the means of alarming secure sinners, it also awakens backsliding Christians, and every ardent saint will unite his prayer with the voice of the speaker. And is this strange ? Certainly it is not. Even in the affairs of this world you cannot bring men to exertion, by a cold address however rational it may be. They may have patience with what they esteem speculative and rational demonstration,

but action is not the effect produced. This paper is not designed to discourage doctrinal instructions, but to lead all to that manner of teaching men which will be felt by their hearts and consciences. It is more difficult to describe than to conceive, but what is meant, is that pathos, and solemnity of diction, which is commonly blessed by an unction from on high. Where this is joined with the unadulterated doctrines of the gospel, it proves to be that kind of teaching which the apostle calls, "in demonstration of the Spirit, and in power;" but where this is wanting, the means of grace are defective. We can promise nothing to the efforts of men, where the Spirit of God is denied, but the Spirit acts both through the common laws of nature, and in the sovereign efficiency of sanctifying grace; therefore, we ought not to separate these universal laws of operation. When we hear Jesus crying on the cross, in the midst of his agonies, "Father, forgive them they know not what they do,"—it seems to be crossing nature itself, to describe the scene without application to the hearer, and in the cold language of a mere speculatist.

While on this subject, Mr. Editor, permit me to add, that Pulpit Eloquence is now become a very fashionable theme of conversation, and the effort of many, and no man hath been more affected and edified by it than I have myself. But what is Pulpit Eloquence? This is a sacred question, and one very difficult to answer. It is a rare gift, in which nature and grace must combine, and which few

possess. Some mistake elegance of diction for Pulpit Eloquence, but nothing is more true, than that the former may exist to a high degree when there is nothing of the latter; at the same time it is allowed, that gross inelegance, and the want of common grammar will prevent the effect desired. Others seem to suppose that it consists in wild flights of imagination, which are checked neither by reason, personal reverence, or a regard to the solemn example of diction in the word of God. But we never have found that the most happy imagination hath been able to produce seriousness or edification in common Christian congregations, without a humble and solemn use and application of the truths of the gospel. The preacher of false taste and little piety, may search heaven and earth for images, he may distort language, he may endeavor to bring down the angels of heaven, and mingle them with the imperfect saints of earth in their present worship, yea, he may address eternal Deity in a manner as artificial and rhetorical as the heathen addressed Jupiter and Minerva, without being the instrument of awakening one sinner, or comforting the heart of the least of the saints. The multitude may be astonished, a few proud critics may approve or disapprove, and all those be contented, who wish their consciences to remain still slumbering: but not a soul will be found enquiring, "What shall I do to be saved?" The reason of this is plain. By the exhibition, the hearer hath been led

from himself, a miserable sinner who needs salvation, to admire the parts of the speaker; from attention to the truth, to a particular manner of expressing it, and his conscience hath had no part in the business. Unhappy hearer! the sabbath of the Lord hath been lost to thee.

The question returns, What is true Pulpit Eloquence? As I am one from whom an exhibition of it will never be expected, I decline an answer to the question, but as I often have, and pray that I may again feel its effects, I will add a few words on these. The speaker, however admirably he may have performed, will be forgotten by the hearer, under a more solemn impression of a present God. The peculiar manner of expressing the truth, whether by word or action, will be lost in a sense of its weight and importance. The conscience will become tender, the heart be filled, and the whole mind made solemn. Conviction of sin and joy in the Holy Ghost may be hoped for as the consequence, in sinners and in Christians, and that all will retire under such impressions, as naturally lead men from the sanctuary to the closet.

LAICUS.



[Soon after the preceding remarks of *Laicus* came to hand, an Oration was received, delivered by Edward D. Griffin, D. D. Professor of Pulpit Eloquence, in the theological Institution, Andover, Massachusetts. As this is the best answer to the question, which *Laicus*

declined answering, What is Pulpit Eloquence? The Editor has presumed to make the following Extract.]

“**B**UT through whatever medium an impression is made on the mind, *it must be made by divine truth, or it is made in vain.* And it must be made by the *power of God.* We do not expect, nor desire to send forth preachers, with powers of persuasion competent of themselves to triumph over human ignorance and opposition. Paul may plant, and Appollos may water; but it is God who gives the increase. Ministers may indeed convince the understanding, and affect the passions, without any special interposition of God. They may preach what the divine Spirit may effectually apply to the heart. But the success of the gospel is insured, not by human eloquence, but by the interpositions of omnipotent grace. This is true in the fullest and most absolute sense. It is as true as that the sound of the trumpets did not demolish the walls of Jericho; as that the three hundred men, standing still in their place, did not destroy the hosts of Midian; as that the God of the armies of Israel, and not the sling and the stone, prevailed against the champion of the Philistines.

“These are some of the ways through which, with dependence on God, divine truth is to be introduced to the apprehension and feeling of men. But how to manage the different powers of the mind, in suberviency to this end, is one of the

nicest points to be examined in the study of pulpit eloquence.

"The *understanding*, as the leading faculty, must chiefly be addressed. But the labor of the preacher does not end here, as though the soul were nothing but intellect. There is a *conscience* to be affected. Men must not only possess speculative knowledge; they must feel the pungency of divine truth,—the conviction of obligation and ill desert. Their conscience must be assailed by the solemn application of truth to themselves. The affections must indeed be reached through the understanding and conscience; but not by a cold dissertation on abstract propositions; they must be touched by objects placed in their most affecting attitudes, and by truth tenderly applied to the heart. No attempt to excite the affections ought to be made, except for some useful end. Addresses to the passions merely to melt the mass, without seizing the occasion to fix the stamp of truth, is an artifice infinitely beneath a preacher of the everlasting gospel. In a mind properly disciplined, the *imagination* will keep pace with the affections. It must never outstrip them. When the imagination of a preacher gets unharnessed from the affections, and runs wild, it leaves an audience with no better emotion than wonder, mingled perhaps with contempt. The power of *sympathy* must also be brought into action; but for this purpose the preacher himself must feel. No imitation of passion, no substitution of ardour for real feeling, will avail. He must feel; and he must express his

feelings in the language, tones, looks, and gestures of nature. No theatrical starts, no affectation or grimace, no pomp or turgidity, may be employed. Nature is not less the perfection of this art, than of painting, statuary, and descriptive poetry: and one of the essential attributes of nature is *simplicity*.

"The basis of pulpit eloquence, then, is good sense and real feeling;—good sense instructed by the word of God, and real feeling excited by His Spirit. Between the eloquence of thought and the eloquence of words, the difference is as great as between gold and dross. The eloquence of thought bears away the soul; the eloquence of words may please the ear, but it never reached the heart. It is a pitiful device to gain popularity, unworthy of any man of sense, and in a preacher of the gospel, utterly contemptible. It is nothing better than a detestable species of clerical foppery. How infinitely different are such effeminate effusions, from the dignity and solemnity of Christ's sermon on the mount! The disgust which has been often produced by this spurious eloquence, has excited prejudices, even in good men, against every attempt to improve the eloquence of the pulpit. But this is rushing to the other extreme. Was not Aaron eloquent? Was not Apollos eloquent? Was not Paul eloquent? Was not Jesus of Nazareth eloquent, who spake as never man spake?

"The masterly specimens of Paul's eloquence, before the court of Areopagus, on the stairs of the castle Antonia,

and before Agrippa, leave no ground to wonder at his being ranked, even by a heathen writer, among the three most distinguished orators of antiquity. But the eloquence of Paul was *the eloquence of thought*. His *preaching was not with the enticing words of man's wisdom; but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power*. He came not with the excellency of speech, not with the wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. He did not indeed deem it improper to seek out, like the royal preacher, acceptable words; but the force of his eloquence lay in the greatness of his conceptions, poured from a heart warmed by the Holy Ghost.

"Against such eloquence who will venture to object? And indeed on what principle can you exclude eloquence from the pulpit, while you admit it at the bar, and in deliberative assemblies? The preacher of everlasting truth has certainly the noblest *subjects* that ever elevated and enkindled the soul of man;—not the intrigues of a Philip,—not the plots of a Cataline; but the rebellion of angels,—the creation of a world, the incarnation and death of the Son of God,—the resurrection of men,—the dissolution of nature,—the general judgment, and the final confirmation of countless millions of men and angels in happiness or misery.—No subjects are so sublime;—none so interesting to the feelings of a reflecting audience: no orator was himself ever so deeply interested in his subject as a godly minister is in the truths which he presses

upon his hearers. If on any topic he can become impassioned, and be carried beyond himself, it is on the theme of immortal love, and the everlasting destinies of men.

"It must be admitted, however, that there is a material difference between the eloquence of the pulpit, and that of the bar, or popular assemblies. Cicero, set to manage concerns of a worldly nature, and having to address himself only to feelings natural to men, found the passions which he wished to move already existing: *Paul* went forth as an instrument to create new tastes, and to awaken feelings which nothing but a supernatural influence could create. Cicero could rouse the *selfish* passions,—could give private interest a tongue to plead his cause; and never appealed to any thing in man superior to the natural love of justice, or the love of country: Paul, commissioned to spread the triumphs of universal benevolence, aimed to excite none but holy feelings. Cicero sometimes found it his interest, by unlawful means, to enlist the prejudices of the judges. He would introduce the accused, with his wife and children, clad in habiliments of mourning, to awaken passions which had no connexion with the justice of his cause: Paul presented nothing but the truths of God. Cicero's object was to make men *act*: Paul's aim was lost unless they acted from *holy motives*. Cicero had nothing to do with the *dispositions* of men, further than to *carry a point*: Paul's *point* was the *dis-*

position itself. Cicero relied on his powers of persuasion, as he depended on any of the stated operations of nature; for there was a natural connexion between the motives which he urged, and the emotion or action which he wished to produce: Paul saw no such connexion between his preaching and the salvation of men; and he went from country to country with an eye of dependence immoveably fixed on the throne of God. And yet Paul was not the less eloquent. He knew that he had as good a *right*, and he found as much *encouragement*, as the Roman orator, to employ all the arts of persuasion; only he confined himself to the exhibition of *divine truth*. And it was not in vain that he was more eloquent than other men. Not only did he charm the ear, and chain attention to his lips; not only did he command the natural avenues to the soul; but, by the flashes of his eloquence, he threw light upon the *understanding* and *conscience*, as another man could not have done.

"These remarks are intended, in some measure, to illustrate the importance of pulpit eloquence; and to show the utility of a course of instruction which may convey to our youth some just ideas of this sacred art. I could wish that more talents and piety, that more learning and taste, were combined in this department. But the small portion of these qualifications which has fallen to my lot, will, I hope, be steadily devoted to the object in view. If, by divine aid, I may be so happy as to give a moderate

degree of satisfaction to the friends of the institution, and render some service to the cause of Zion, my highest hopes will be answered, and my reward will be great."



MR. EDITOR,

IF you think the following remarks to be correct, on the importance of giving to youth an early and thorough acquaintance with the sacred scriptures, you are desired to give them a place in the Magazine.

THERE is no duty in which the inhabitants of this christianized country are more deficient, than in giving to the youth under their care and government a proper knowledge of the doctrines, precepts and duties enjoined in the word of God. A knowledge of these doctrines and duties is necessary for their happiness both in the present and future world; it is necessary for a safe conduct through life, for peace in death, and acceptance with God, the common judge of men; yet many, who know all this, are utterly deficient in their duty. Many of these deficient persons are moral in their conduct, and profess to believe the scriptures are the unerring word of God; some of them profess to be Christians, in the highest sense the word can be used; all of them are anxious to teach their children and youth in the principles of natural science; they render themselves the slaves of servile labor, by day and night, to provide them an earthly patrimony; the first symptom of

disease in the child distracts their souls, and the whole surrounding country is searched for medical aid : Yet on those subjects, which give the only wisdom, by which human life is rendered tolerable, and the salvation of eternity is secured, there is no expense, no care to give instruction. This is a surprising neglect in those who are only nominal Christians ; much more surprising when found in many of whom we have better hopes, that they are Christians indeed. It can be imputed only to that hardness of heart and blindness of mind, whereof a remainder is found in the best men, through which they are in some respects still immured and enslaved by the world.

It is most apparent, that children are by God their Creator and only Redeemer, placed in the hands of parents as ministers for their eternal good. To them is committed by Providence, their introduction to being, the nursing of their bodies, the nurture of their intelligent faculties as nature brings them to some degree of maturity, their government, their instruction in things which they are capable of knowing, and the formation of those habits with which they enter into life.—Accordingly, it is given in charge to parents, that they educate their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The precepts on this subject, the admonitions, the judgments for neglect, the rewards of fidelity, found in the holy scriptures, are innumerable. Who can read the history of the sons of Eli, and of Timothy the offspring of Lois and Eunice,

without seeing the effects of parental education ! and who can reflect on the state of the negligent Eli, although he was the high priest of the Lord, without a tear over his backsliding !

Consider also the awful consequences of an irreligious education on those who are its subjects. To know this we have only to make an appeal to experience. Look on the world, look on families and the event of an irreligious education. In the means of an irreligious education, I would not confine myself wholly to the conduct of parents, who are unholy and in some things openly vicious ; but extend it to all, who are deficient in the duties of religiously instructing and governing the youth committed to their care. In this number many may be found, who have excelled in some virtues, while defective in this. Godly men have often failed in the religious instruction of their children. The pious king David was afflicted in his children, and I do not know that we have any evidence he was faithful in this respect. Let all parents who now live take the warning.

But the importance of the duty appears in the clearest manner from considering the awful consequences on the youth, both for time and eternity. Mark the lives of those who are irreligiously educated ! Perhaps they may be rich and honorable, for riches and honor in this world are no particular mark of divine favor. The probability is however that poverty and a loss of reputation,

will be the consequences in this life.

Considering the depravity of human nature, what a state this world is, how many temptations and allurements surround men, there is every reason to suppose such youth will come into life unprincipled, very thoughtless of a supreme God, ignorant of his perfections, and their own obligations to love, serve and obey him; ignorant of their obligations to exercise benevolence, truth and justice to men; ignorant of their own hearts, and the nature and eternal danger of sin; ignorant of all the wiles through which tempters destroy; also, of their need of salvation, and the way and means by which it is effected. We may trace them through life in the ways of thoughtlessness and impiety; we may come and stand by the side of their dying beds, and see that they have been arrested unexpectedly, ignorant of truth, doctrinally unacquainted with the change they are to make, and trembling in anticipation of the moment, which must speedily separate them from time.

How can the parent, who hath been so intense in securing an earthly patrimony, or furnishing the mind with such knowledge as only subserves the interests of this world, behold such a scene without feeling a mind appalled through his own neglect!

Perhaps he will plead incompetence for his own duty, and ask how he shall discharge the arduous task of instructing his youth in all the moral and Christian duties which are necessary for a wise conduct in

this life, and to receive its rewards in a future? I here recur to some of my first remarks as an answer to the question, The importance of early instructing youth in the doctrines, precepts, and duties enjoined in the holy scriptures. Neglectful parents, if they will do their duty in the use of means, which are placed fully within their power, may hope God himself will instruct their children by his own word and Spirit. God hath not left us to weak reason for instruction concerning our own duty and salvation. With the gift of his Son, he hath also given us his word and Spirit, and when his word is seriously studied, he commonly gives his Spirit.—Without these the adult must remain in as deep and fatal ignorance as the child. If a knowledge of the scriptures be necessary for all men, why deny the youth his share? If the parent replies, the child cannot understand the deep things of the holy oracles, I am bold to answer, this is a mere evasion. Many things are written in the scriptures which the parent cannot comprehend, and these must be received on the weight of evidence for their divine authority. Those who make this objection are moved by a pride springing from their own ignorance, or from wilful error. All the truths of revelation, necessary to instruct in the duties of a wise life, are written in the most intelligible manner. The language is plain and familiar, the style perspicuous, the arrangement simple, and without art, as if on purpose to accommodate truth to the illiterate. The instruction is given, in an

historical preceptive or doctrinal form as best suits the subject ; and all this is done with that solemnity and benevolence, which must have a powerful tendency to awe and melt the human heart. The character, the holiness, the sovereignty and love of God are described with such plainness of diction, that the instructor must resort to the very words of the scriptures, either to conceive aright himself, or to teach another. The displays of love and compassion in the gospel exceed all that a created mind can originate, and they are best brought down to human conception by the plain narration of facts recorded in the evangelical history. The preceptive parts of the scriptures, enjoining a virtuous temper and practice, allowed by all to be necessary for the happiness of this life, are concise and clear, more copious than all which have been given by uninspired men, and so expressed as to show their origin from a heart that is good, animated by a true faith in Christ, and preparation for the glory of another world.

The short narratives of men and nations recorded in the scriptures, contain much historical knowledge which cannot be found in all the profane writers. The Old Testament is the gospel in miniature, either typically expressed, or prophetically promised. The lives of bad men with their event, leads to tremble at the nature and consequences of sin. The lives of good men are our example, their comforts, if we are faithful, may be our comforts, their imperfections are for our warning,

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and by following in their steps we may obtain glory. All this instruction is enforced by the solemn rewards of eternity. But why in this short paper do I enter on a description of the excellence of the holy scriptures ? a subject sufficient for volumes, and it can never be exhausted. I was led to it by a strong desire to enforce on parents and masters the duty of instructing youth in the holy scriptures. If such think they cannot explain the sacred oracles, perhaps they think correctly, but this doth not excuse them from the duty of furnishing the young with the holy volume, enjoining them to read, and leaving them to their own understanding. The understanding of a child is often more correct than the explanation of a remiss parent.

LAICUS.

Religious Intelligence.

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Narrative of a Revival of Religion in Paris, State of New-York, in a Letter from the Rev. Eliphalet Steele of Paris, to Rev. Alvan Hyde of Lee, dated February 12, 1810.

REV. SIR,

YOU requested me, in your letter, to give you a particular account of the revival of religion in Paris. With great pleasure, Sir, I undertake to give you *some* account ; but a *particular* account of what has taken place since the awakening began, which is now about eight months, would fill a small volume.

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The awakening here has been remarkable on several accounts,

1. On account of the sudden and unexpected appearance of it, bursting forth like fire which had long been pent in, and then, all at once, found an opening. The number which attended conferences, weekly, before the awakening, would not average thirty; but in about three weeks after there appeared some particular attention among people, the number was increased to, or nearly to three hundred, on Sabbath-day evening; when, on account of numbers, we meet in the meeting-house. Conferences were set up, and attended every night in the week, except Saturday, and sometimes three in a night, in different parts of the society. If I went to visit a particular family, it would be known in the neighborhood, and in a few minutes, the room where I was would be filled with people, solem as the grave.

2. On account of the great numbers which were arrested by Almighty power, almost at once. For the divine work took place, in almost all parts of this society, in a short time after it first commenced.

3. On account of the anguish and overwhelming distress generally, among those who were awakened to any great degree. Some such cases there always are, where there is an awakening, but here they were common. I will mention one instance of the many,—this will explain what I mean. A young woman about twenty years of age lived at an house where the man was *rejoicing in hope*; his wife was then in great dis-

tress; so was this girl; after several days, the woman's mind became calm, but full of joy, and sweet consolation. The girl perceived the alteration in the woman's countenance, and enquired what was the matter. The woman told her her feelings. Then the enmity of the young woman's heart roused up, and rose to a dreadful height. I felt, she told me, that God was unjust, cruel, hard. My anguish and distress were so great that I could not shed a tear. I walked the room, but felt as if I should die; several times I took up the bible, and thought I would read, but threw it down again. I thought I would pray; but as God had given that woman relief, and left me in this distress, I would not pray to him. All this time my pain and distress were so dreadful I could not shed one tear. If I remember rightly, she was about half a day in this situation, she would not read, or pray, or cry. She at length, *came to herself*. She thought she could not live so, she should die in a little time. I will try to be reconciled to God,—I will try to submit to him. And behold immediately, her eyes ran down with tears, her distress was gone. She could read the bible with pleasure, pray with fervency, and rejoice with joy unspeakable.

One reason why the distress of awakened sinners has been uncommonly great, speaking generally, was this, I have thought. The church have taken great pains to diffuse doctrinal knowledge among the people. So that now when people, even

young people, come to feel the truth, they are convinced that their depravity is their own crime ; and that it is voluntary exercise. One instance out of many.—I was conversing with a young girl,—among other questions, I asked the following : Are you really sensible that you are a sinner ? Yes, Sir, I know I am. Does it appear to you that you are a *great* sinner ? Yes, I am full of sin. Well, you know your duty ; your duty is to be reconciled to God, to repent and believe the gospel. Yes, Sir, I know that is my duty, but I cannot do it. But you know you cannot, as you express it, is in your will, your choice. The reason you live, day after day, in impenitency and unbelief, is because you do not desire to repent ; it is your choice to live and act as you do. She answered, I know that is the case, all the difficulty is in myself. On this, she burst into tears.

Among the awakened, there is no contest about the doctrines of depravity, divine sovereignty, decrees, &c. These are all readily admitted. I say no contest ; I mean, they are not disputed ; they know they are in the bible. But ask them whether they embrace them, approve, and are pleased with them, they readily own they are not.

4. The awakening has been remarkable on this account also, it has been among persons from about 60 years of age, down to 11 years old, and all intermediate ages. But much more among persons under 30. And the greatest number under 21 years, of any given age.

5. The order and regular

conduct of people, are worthy of particular notice. The awe and solemnity on their minds, was, no doubt, one reason of this. When an hundred, or hundreds, were met in conference, there was, generally, a profound silence, except the voice of the speaker. All were solemn, and attentive, and still.

6. I also remark, that the awakening has been, mostly in families, where one, or both the parents were professors of religion. In a few instances, however, it has been otherwise, and but a few. Thus God appears to own and bless his own institutions.

I find it will not do to be so particular. Twelve were admitted into the church, October 29th, and some before. I will come to November, without noticing particulars. The time was much occupied, the two last weeks in November, and the two first in December, examining candidates for admission into the church. The meetings, on these occasions, were pleasing and solemn, beyond description. The candidates were mostly young people. The greatest part was under 21 years of age. This was a tender, an affecting, and rejoicing scene to me ; eight or ten children, (so I call them,) fifty or sixty spectators in the room ; myself, an old man, a number of old professors present : then to look on those young persons, which we hope God had called into his kingdom to support his cause, when we were sleeping in our graves ; that they were the seed of Christ, which should serve him here, when our work was done ; filled me, sometimes

with such sensations, that I was scarcely decent in my deportment ; and often I was so overcome with a sense of divine, sovereign grace, that I, was constrained to sit silent, and leave the business of examination with some of the brethren. In the four weeks abovementioned, forty were examined. The propriety and correctness of the answers, which these youth gave to doctrinal questions, surprised, as well as pleased me. I was afraid their minds were almost a blank ; but I found that God had taught them more in four or five months, than I had taught them in double that number of years.

I will here repeat some questions, which I suggested to a child thirteen years of age, and her answers. I spoke to her, as to a child. Marinda, (that was her name) you are a little girl, and your sins are little, a'nt they ? No Sir, there are no little sins, I sin against God. But child, you never did a great many sins, did you, you are a little girl ; and such little children as you cannot commit a great many sins, can they ? O, Sir, I never did any thing but sin in all my days, I am full of sin. Well, if it be so, Marinda, you do not care much about it, do you ? Yes, Sir, because it is all against God. Well, what if it is against God, you don't care any thing about God, do you ? I believe I do care some about him. But, my child, you don't suppose you love God ? I think I do, I hope I do. Do you think you love God ? Yes. I wish then, you would tell me, for what you love him. Her an-

swer was in these words, Because he is holy.

I do not design you should infer from this instance, that all the young people answered all questions with like propriety. There was a diversity, as to that.

Lord's day December 31, they were admitted into the church ; forty in number. Such a sight I never witnessed before. It was impressive, solemn, joyful. Being most of them young people under 21 years of age, I had my anxieties lest some uncomfortable circumstance should happen through ignorance, and breed disorder. But there was perfect order and solemnity. Of the 40, admitted at this time, 26 were young unmarried persons. Ten males, 16 females. Several families, two sisters in each. Two families, a brother and two sisters each. In one family, eight have been the subjects of the work. Seven joined the church at once ; six own brothers and sisters, and one sister-in-law, wife of the eldest son. Conversing with the father of these children, I told him, if he was not thankful for what God had done in his family, he was the most ungrateful man in the world.

In the year 1809, fifty-four new members were added to this church, and four who moved here from other churches : an increase of 58 members last year. A number, I know not how many, will offer themselves for examination soon. There are now several instances of persons under deep impression. Some new cases which I have lately heard of. Conferences still kept, as formerly ;

and they are full and solemn. Every Thursday afternoon, I have a conference designed for young people. At one of these there were between 80 and 90 in number. There are as many, generally, as can be accommodated in a large room.

Thus, I have given a sketch, and but a sketch, of that, with which my heart is full. O, that it was humble ! I can with propriety adopt the words of Peter, spoken on another occasion :—*Lord, it is good to be here.—Come magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his holy name together.* Grace ! grace ! what a display of SOVEREIGN GRACE ! That God should indulge me with a sight of such a work ; and make use of me as an instrument in a work so great, so glorious and all divine ! a work, which I believe, fills heaven with joy. *O what shall I render to the Lord for all the kindness he has shewn to me, and the people to whom I minister !*

When an awakening takes place, as here, the minister often sinks under the weight of increased labor ; but although I have in some instances attended conferences almost every evening in the week, besides visiting by day, I have to acknowledge divine goodness, in giving strength of body, to endure it all. My health is now better than it was for about two years before last June.

I am,

Rev. and Dear Sir,

Yours in Friendship,

E. STEELE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CONNECTICUT MAGAZINE.

REV. SIR.

AGREEABLE to your request, I now give you the following account of a revival of religion in this place. If you think proper, you will give it a place in your Magazine.

AT the time of my Ordination over the first church and society in Glastenbury, which took place June 24th, 1807, there was a general stupidity among all classes of people relative to the things of religion. I cannot describe the sensations I felt when I visited among the dear people lately committed to my pastoral care, and found so few disposed to converse about the concerns of an eternal world. Zion seemed to be covered with dust. The friends of God, filled with dejection and discouragement, were almost buried and lost in the rubbish of the world. Our prospects, relative to religion, were covered with an almost impenetrable gloom. The house of God was in a great measure forsaken, family worship neglected, and experimental religion, by many, treated with contempt. In this state of darkness and gloom, few were disposed to cry to God for mercy. During the year 1807, but three persons from the world were admitted, into our communion. The following year but four were admitted, and three of those were long before in covenant.

Soon after my settlement in this place, I proposed to some of our serious people a weekly

meeting. The proposal was agreed to, and the appointment was accordingly made. These meetings for about a year and an half were but thinly attended. Such was our deplorable condition. In this state of darkness and ruin, God, who is rich in mercy, was pleased to cast upon us a compassionate eye. At the close of the year 1808, there appeared a more general disposition to listen to the glad news of salvation. On this account the number of weekly meetings was increased, and began to be more full and solemn. During the winter of 1809, it became apparent that there was an unusual attention to religion among us. There appeared to be a general solemnity through the congregation, and a considerable number was evidently awakened from their stupidity to some sense of their wretched condition. Filled with alarm in view of their approaching ruin, one and another were heard to make the enquiry, "What shall I do to be saved?" The attention has continued with very little interruption, from its commencement to the present time. It seems evident that the Spirit of the Lord is yet striving with the people. Our last meetings witness that God has not yet forsaken us. They are now more fully attended than at any former period; and considering that God works only for his name's sake, we hope that our great unworthiness will not be a bar to the bestowment of future blessings. The friends of religion seem to be awakened to greater fervency and importunity in prayer. We have reason to believe

there are those who cry unto God day and night for the prosperity of Zion. Perishing sinners, who never pray for themselves, are remembered with tenderness and affection in their addresses at the throne of grace. Those who have experienced the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, manifest a tender concern for others who are insensible of their danger. They can say to such in the language of piety, "O taste and see that the Lord is good."

Since the revival commenced, more than forty persons have entertained hopes that they "have passed from death to life." Of these twenty-four have been added to the church, and the rest will probably soon make a public profession of religion. About thirty are now under serious impressions of mind. How many of these will be converted and finally saved we cannot foretell; but there is great reason to fear that some of them will be added to the list of those that perish. We have reason to fear this from the example of some who were awakened the past year. Several who for a time were apparently under deep concern, now appear to be almost as thoughtless as before, and probably very soon their "last state will be worse than the first."

The work of the Lord among us bears no resemblance to a sudden shower, or a rapid torrent. The effusion of the Holy Spirit has not been as in many places, like a mighty rushing wind, but as the still small voice. It resembles the

small rain or the gentle dew. It is "as the dew of Hermon and the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion." Instances of awakening have not been frequent, but divine influences have appeared to be constantly distilling upon us; and we have reason to bless God for the present promising appearances.

This blessed and glorious work, which we ought to remember with humility on account of our numberless provocations, and with gratitude to God for his unspeakable mercy, has not been confined to any particular class or age. The old and the young have been hopefully brought into the kingdom of Christ, are prepared to speak of the wonders of redeeming love, and to praise the glorious God for the displays of his sovereign grace and mercy. The gray-headed of sixty, and the blooming youth of eighteen, are prepared to unite in this song, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing, for thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood."

The work has not been confined to any particular part of the society. Those whom God has chosen as vessels of mercy, and as we trust to be to the praise of his glorious grace, are found scattered through the place. The work as yet has been far from universal. Tho' there has been something of a general thoughtfulness among all classes about the concerns of their souls, yet many whole families have been passed by, and we have reason to fear, are left

in a state of sin, condemnation and ruin. We know not how many of these will stand desponding, wondering and perishing. We cannot now say, how many of them will take up the lamentation, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." Oh, that such would "repent and be converted, that their sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing come from the presence of the Lord." Where God has entered families by his Holy Spirit, he has seldom made all the subjects of his grace.—He has manifested himself a holy sovereign, not only where he has passed by some families, and left them in a perishing condition, but where he has entered others and taken one or two members, while the rest are left to the hardness of their hearts.

Those who have hopefully become subjects of divine grace, have all been brought to see and acknowledge the total depravity of their hearts, that they were wholly opposed to God, and averse to every thing that is good, that they were condemned by the divine law, and that God would be perfectly just in their eternal punishment. Sensible of their exceeding vileness, they have renounced all merit of their own, all dependence upon their own righteousness, and placed themselves at the feet of Jesus, saying, "Lord save us: We perish." The term of convictions has been unusually long. But very few, it is believed, have entertained hopes that the enmity of their hearts was slain, and they reconciled to God, within six weeks from the time they were first

awakened. Most of those who profess to have experienced the comforts of the Holy Ghost, were under conviction for more than three months, previous to a change. Instances of great distress and terror have been but few. Convictions have ordinarily been gentle and gradual. There has appeared no enthusiasm, disorder and confusion among those who have been subjects of this blessed work. Those who hope they are born of God have been far from boasting. When they have been called upon to give a reason of their hope, they have been ready to answer, "with meekness and fear." They have been sensible that the heart is deceitful above all things, and usually expressed a fear that they should be deceived. The doctrines which were preached, and which they have received, are such as exalt the glorious God, and lay the pride of man in the dust. The distinguishing doctrines of the gospel, such as total depravity, regeneration and election, have been plainly preached. Those who *were* fully opposed to these doctrines have, through the influence of Almighty grace, been brought to reconciliation and have received these as the doctrines of Christ. They who once were blind are made to see.

Such has been the work of the Lord among us. It has indeed been a slow, gradual work, and we hope and earnestly pray that it may continue for a long time to come. Its blessed fruits yet remain, and we trust in the mercy of God, they will never be lost.

This work of God has not

been carried on without opposition. We have found that if we would be the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, we must suffer persecution. But we have found perfect safety under the great "Captain of our salvation." It has appeared that "the foolishness of God, is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." Opposition has indeed arisen, but it is proper to observe it has arisen not from those that "fear God and work righteousness," but from those who do not believe in the bible as a revelation from heaven. It is not strange that such should be opposed to the effusions of the Holy Ghost.—All that they have done is to show their enmity and rage, and wallow in their own shame. The blessed work of the Lord still prospers, and they find all their attempts to hinder its progress totally abortive. It is hoped they will be led to a serious consideration of their ways, lest they be "found fighting against God," and "kindle a fire in his anger which will burn to the lowest hell."

On the whole, we have great reason to praise and bless God for what he has done. In his great mercy he has appeared to comfort and rejoice the hearts of his own children, and to pluck sinners as brands from the burning. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." I conclude by earnestly soliciting the prayers of every Christian reader. O, pray for us, that this blessed work may continue, that

the Holy Spirit may not be withdrawn while multitudes of sinners are just ready to sink into endless perdition. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem." "Ye that make mention of the name of the Lord, keep not silence and give him no rest, until he establish and make Jerusalem a praise in the earth."

I am yours, &c.

P. HAWES.

Glastenbury Feb. 20, 1810.



*Extract of a Letter from the
Rev. Bancroft Fowler, Wind-
sor, Vermont.*

"FOR four or five weeks past, there has been a serious and solemn attention to religion in this place. God appears to be pouring out his Spirit upon us as a people. There is scarcely a house in the neighborhood in which I live, in which there have not been some in distress for their souls. A considerable number have hopefully passed from death unto life. The solemnity appears to continue, and there are daily new instances of spiritual concern. We have meetings in this village every evening in the week, Saturday excepted, which have been generally very full notwithstanding the badness of the roads; and also some in other parts of the parish. I have not time at present to give you any further particulars."

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*Memoirs of Mrs. Martha Davis,
consort of deacon Clark Davis,
of Watertown.*

THOUGH Mrs. DAVIS was blessed with pious parents, who dedicated her to the Lord in infancy, and educated her in habits of seriousness; she was not in her own view a subject of grace, till the age of thirty-five. The first part of her married life was passed in a society where what is called, owning the covenant was in practice. She obtained baptism, for her children, but did not come to full communion. In a short time, she removed to a place where the pastor and the church received members only to full communion. For several years, she entertained a very favorable idea of having children baptized, when the parents did not come to the Sacrament of the supper. At no great distance from this time, it pleased the Lord to bring her under conviction of sin. In a review of life, she found that her religion was no more than the form of Godliness. Among other things which brought disquietude to an awakened conscience, she included the baptism of her children, was afraid that she had not dedicated them to the Lord Jesus. Having passed a number of months, under deep concern of mind, she obtained a hope of an interest in the promises, and made a public profession of her faith. Her example was profitable to many. She was free to converse with Christian friends, upon doctrinal and experimental religion; often appeared affected with her hardness of heart; and as-

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cribed all her salvation to rich and sovereign grace, through the Lord Jesus Christ, placing herself among the least of saints. She spake often, and very feelingly, upon revivals of religion : was greatly rejoiced when hearing of a special work of God in different places, and earnestly prayed for the prosperity of Zion. She was ever ready to sympathise with afflicted families ; to visit the chambers of the sick and the dying. She was tried by the loss of friends, and was resigned : not sorrowing as others, who have no hope. She was very useful to young professors of her sex, by guarding their minds against that coldness and those doubts which too often succeed the warmth and engagedness of their first espousal to Christ. She often expressed the trials of the ministers of Jesus, and the danger of their being discouraged, in the present dark times, and the special duty of every Christian to remember them in prayer. She loved the house of God, the preaching of the word, the sacraments, and religious conference meetings. Her mind for the most part was free from the appearance of melancholy. She believed that the highest good of God's moral kingdom would be advanced. She often lamented, that professors have so little engagedness in religious conversation ; that those should be so great strangers, who hope soon to dwell together in that house not made with hands. As she drew near to the close of life, she appeared more deeply engaged in preparing to meet her God. It was noticed by the family, that for a number of weeks before

her last sickness, she was uncommonly attentive to the sacred writings, was often in secret, and more particular in giving religious instruction to her children. The disease with which she died came suddenly, when she was in full health. She departed on the seventeenth day of the fever, (which was typhus) in the 47th year of her age. During this term, she retained her reason for the greatest part of the time. In the beginning of her sickness, she was convinced that it must be unto death. She was asked if the exchange of worlds brought terror to the mind ; she replied, I have no fears to distress me, I know in whom I have believed. She was then asked, What gives you support, in this trying and painful hour ? To which she replied, It is a hope which is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, where Jesus the forerunner has gone. I have prayed, said she, for a number of months, to understand the nature of Christian submission, this has been in my mind, more of late, than what has been common in years past. I trust, that through the grace of God, I have learned in whatever state I am, therein to be content. Do you desire to be restored to health ? To which she replied, Life is sweet, my friends are near and dear to me, my daughters need a mother, my son is so young that he will soon forget me, but I am willing to leave them in the hands of God : It is safe trusting in the Lord ; the judge of all doeth right ; I have no choice, only let the will of the Lord be done.

The next day she asked her husband, if he thought that she should ever enjoy any more health; he said that he hoped that she might. She then remarked, I do not care how much I undergo, if I can but spend the little time to the glory of God. On the Sabbath, having an interval of ease, she desired that some part of the Psalms might be read. Upon hearing some verses in the 119th, she said, O how full of instruction! every word is instructive. She was asked if she knew that it was Sabbath day. She said, O yes, it is communion day. I hoped to attend this Sacrament; but we must be satisfied with the crumbs which fall from our master's table. In giving advice to her daughters, she said, ask a blessing upon every thing you do, upon your words, and even upon your thoughts. It was mentioned that a number had been received to full communion in the church, since her sickness. She said, I rejoice, religion is the one thing needful. In seeing the family and others very deeply affected, she said, why do you weep and lament for me? It will be but a short time before we shall meet again. If we are faithful, we shall meet never more to part. Nearer the close of life, she was asked how the objects of another world appeared. She answered, O, exceedingly delightful! I can look forward to eternity with great delight. On the evening before her death, she looked upward and said, O, the angels are gathering around to conduct me home! She called the family together, consisting of a

husband, two daughters, and a little son, and gave them her parting directions, advising them to attend to religion in preference to any other object; to be of one heart and mind. She continued a few hours unable to speak, and left this world of sorrow, July 6th, 1809. Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord.



The Editor's solicitation for liberality to the Bible Society of Connecticut.

THE Editor, when he heard of this institution, flattered himself that it would receive more liberal support than we have reason to believe it has experienced. Many hearts have been rejoiced by its donations, but not so many as it was hoped.—Whence can this proceed? It must be from inattention to a great and most interesting subject. It cannot be that charity is wearied, for it faileth not, delights in doing good, and ceaseth not to communicate. Is it because Christians have not ability? To suppose this would be to deny the bounty of God to his people. Is it a criminal neglect in Christians? Ah! I fear we have hit the fatal cause. This fatal cause which hath lethargized the visible kingdom of Christ, for many ages, under the attacks of its most potent enemies. It may be said, can the people of Connecticut be destitute of the holy scriptures? The writer, judging from recent examinations of his own, is ready to assert there are several hundreds, if not thousands of houses and cotta-

ges in the state, were the word of life cannot be found. One part of these people are indigent, and hunger presses every penny earned from their hands; another part have the means of purchasing, while a love of the world prevails over a sense of their duty and the means of salvation. No man can deny the fitness of dispensing charity to the first; the last, by receiving a bible or testament gratis, may be induced to read what will be to them the words of eternal life; also, many who have not the scriptures, when they find Christians disposing of them without reward, may be induced to procure them by their own efforts. The salvation of these souls is precious, and blessed is he who ministereth thereto. What minister of religion, what Christian, what friend of happiness here and hereafter, can deny his aid to a design so benevolent, and full-fraught with blessings to immortal souls. The next annual meeting of the Society will be at the time of the general election in Hartford.

Although the officers of this Institution have been once named in this Magazine, it may be proper to repeat them to obtain the full confidence of the public. The writer has been informed, that the committee of distribution request all ministers and others who interest themselves in the benevolent design, to give them the earliest information of the proper objects of this charity.

The above has been inserted from a sense of duty, without the solicitation or knowledge of

any one, who is a member of the society.

HON. JOHN COTTON SMITH,
President.

JED. HUNTINGTON, Esq. }
Rev. SAMUEL NOTT, } V. Ps.
Rev. AZEL BACKUS, }
Rev. SAMUEL MERWIN, }
Mr. JOSEPH ROGERS, Treasurer.
Mr. HENRY HUDSON, Secretary.

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Note.—A short summary of the efforts and success of the London Missionary Society, and the British and Foreign Bible Society, will be in our next Number.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CONNECTICUT MAGAZINE.

REV. SIR,

THE following copy of a letter to a friend, is submitted to your inspection and disposal.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

IN compliance with your request, I transmit some remarks upon the manuscript sermon which we perused at a late interview. The genius of it is so distant from my habitual mode of thinking, that it is difficult for me to possess, correctly, the views of the author; and as I must depend upon recollection for the sentiments it contains, I may misconceive and misrepresent them, and my remarks be impertinent; but I submit them to your inspection and candor. So far as I form an opinion of the theory,

it is summarily this.—God originally exacted of man, perfect obedience to his law, as the basis of acceptance, and his favor. By the transgression, it became impracticable, that the privileges could be possessed upon that basis, and by the interposition of a Mediator, that term is relinquished; and hence he asserts, that “since the apostacy, God has enacted no law which requires sinless perfection, or perfect obedience;” hence also, he accepts imperfect, sincere obedience, and has made promises to those who love him, to the penitent and humble; and hence, “whoso keepeth the law, happy is he,” even as he who believeth shall be saved. This, I think, is the genius and substance of the sermon. Upon these subjects, I remark,

I. However correct the real views of the author may have been, the expression, “God has enacted no law, since the apostacy, which requires perfect obedience, or sinless perfection,” is very exceptionable, and the sentiment totally inadmissible. It implies, that God has relinquished his original demand of sinless perfection, and does not now require perfect obedience. If this were not his real sentiment, he should have expressed himself more cautiously. If it were, he should have supported the proposition by some authority superior to his confident assertion—by some text of scripture which affirms explicitly, or by direct implication, that God doth not now require rational creatures to love him with *all* their hearts, that he will tolerate them in

dividing their affections between himself and other favorite objects, and in *serving two masters*. But texts of this import, it is presumed, he will never produce; all the law and the prophets, which were since the apostacy, insisting, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*. Be ye holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy. The requirements of sinless perfection, or perfect holiness, appear to have a foundation in nature and reason. As God is supremely excellent, he is worthy of supreme and undivided affection; and as he is the creator, preserver, and benefactor of rational creatures, it is perfectly equitable and proper that he should demand their entire and perfect obedience or service; and inflict an adequate punishment, if they refuse it.

Upon what supposition hath he affirmed, “that God doth not now require sinless perfection?” Is it because the original demand was rigorous and unjust? If it were, the violation of it was no crime. And the fatal effects of disobedience, what are they, the calamities of an arbitrary and a merciless administration? And the gospel, where is the grace of it? Is it an act of restitution for injuries sustained by man, a dispensation of relief from unjust and cruel edicts? If the original demand of perfect obedience, or sinless perfection, were equitable and proper, what reason can be given, why it should be annulled? Do not God’s character and prerogatives equally demand it now, as they did before the apostacy? Or hath the situation of man procured

him an exemption from it? Has the apostacy destroyed his intellect? If it hath debilitated his faculties, as God regulates his demands by the capacity of the subject, not according to what a man hath not, but according to what he hath, he is now as *capable* of sinless perfection, as he was before the apostacy. Can any reason be assigned for the diminution of the original demand of sinless perfection, which will not operate equally for the total abolition of it?

Is there not an impropriety, or an absurdity, in the expression, God hath enacted no law since the apostacy, which requires sinless perfection, implying, that God now requires, or will accept, *a perfection which hath sin mixed with it*, a partial obedience only. But if he doth not exact entire, supreme love, or the love of the whole heart, as where there is no law, there can be no transgression, the deficit is no sin, the quantity of obedience required, being yielded, the command will be perfectly obeyed, and this will be sinless perfection. If I might be indulged in expressing my own apprehension of these subjects, I should insist, that God's original demand of sinless perfection, and the inviolability of man's obligation to perform it, are maintained with undiminished vigor, and are established irreversibly, as the ordinances of heaven; and every deviation is an iniquity to be punished by the judge; and consequently, for divine approbation, present sinless perfection is of absolute, essential necessity; but through the apostacy, this hath become absolute-

ly unattainable by man, and God hath instituted a dispensation of grace, through a Mediator. In this, the original demand of perfect obedience is continued in its whole extent; but the obedience is yielded by the substitute, and pardon and divine favor are extended to those who comply with it, *as acts of grace*, for his sake *only*, or for the consideration of his obedience and merit, *without any respect to the personal qualification, or moral virtue, of the subject, as the proper basis of them*, and if, under this dispensation, God approves and blesses the humble, and those who obey him, it is not because he has so reduced his demands, that holiness, or grace, exercised in an imperfect degree, is commensurate with them; but because mercy and truth meet together in the person of the substitute, to whom they are united, and for whose righteousness sake *only*, the Lord is well pleased with them; and but for which he would address the holiest and the best, as the prophet addressed the king of Israel, *What have I to do with thee; get thee to the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother, surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat, Christ, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee.*

Such are my views of the subject, and such, I persuade myself, are the real views of the author, at least, in his closet, though he hath expressed himself in terms remote from them, and tending to subvert the gospel of Christ. He affirms,

II. 'That God has made promises to those who love and

obey him, as he hath to believers in Christ.'

Though it be true, that God hath made promises to those who love him, to the humble and penitent, I am not disposed to admit the assertion in his sense of it. The capital features of the sermon impress the sentiment, that under the present administration of God's government, he hath abandoned the original demand of sinless perfection, and now extends his favors to the sincere and upright, in the same manner, as under the primitive dispensation, he would have granted them to the perfect. In illustrating this, he draws a parallel between those who love God, and believers in Christ, and insists, that God respects the moral goodness of those who obey him, promises and rewards them in the same manner as he doth believers in Christ Jesus; and to obviate objections, applies the humble confession of the church, *All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*, to the doings of the unregenerate, implying, that this is not true of the righteousness of saints; and insinuating, that saints reflect upon their moral goodness with complacency, as acceptable to God, and a source of confidence and joy to themselves, an insinuation to which I suspect, they will by no means accede: and the expression of the apostle, *Those things which were gain to me, I counted loss for Christ*, to his pharisaic righteousness,—omitting his assertion, *Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord*, which would have confu-

ted the sentiment he designed to support. The parallel combines two propositions which are false and deceptive.

1. That they who love God, and they who believe in Christ, do, or may exist, as distinct and separate characters. Upon any other hypothesis, his argumentation is illusive and vain. If his assertions considered them as involving each other, and constituting one identical character, they would only beat the air, by proving, that God has made promises to those who believe as he hath to believers, in Christ. But that they who believe in Christ, and they who love God, are distinct and separate characters, according to scripture, is not true. Faith worketh by love, and cannot subsist without it. Neither can love exist without faith. They mutually involve each other, and a lover of God, and a believer in Christ are the same character, and the same person. The system of reasoning, consequently, is like a baseless fabric.

2. That God has made promises to exercises and acts, separate from faith, or for other considerations than union to Christ, or for his sake.

This is obviously connected with the other. Faith and love being considered as separate qualities, or graces, not involving each other, if God has made promises to those who love him, as he hath to believers in Christ, their love is the objective cause of the promises made to them, as faith, or Christ, is the objective cause of the promises made to those who believe in him, and the causes or motives of these promises, are as distinct

as the characters, or faith and love, to which they apply, are remote one from the other ; and if God has made promises to those who love him, to the contrite and humble, not as believers, their love and humility are the procuring causes of these promises, so far Christ profits them nothing, and to them he hath died in vain ; but one single text sufficiently exposes the fallacy of his reasoning. *All the promises of God in him, Christ, are yea, and in him amen, to the glory of God by us.*

It is true that God loves the righteous, has complacence in the exercises of love, humility, and repentance, as holy exercises, but these exercises are so disproportioned to their objects, and attended with those great and criminal defects which so counterbalance all the moral virtue, and efface all the beauty of them, that they would be infinitely odious to God, and procure his wrath, rather than promises of favor, if faith were not combined with them, and were they not, indulge the expression, purified with the blood, and perfumed with the merit of Jesus. The sentiments expressed in the sermon, so manifestly tend to divert the mind from the grand subjects contemplated in the gospel, to declare, or vindicate, God's righteousness, expose the exceeding sinfulness, or turpitude of sin, abase human pride, exalt Christ, and glorify sovereign grace, that this (and probably all the preceding remarks,) hath been suggested by your own reflection, and to propose it, would be superfluous.

The remarks already have been protracted far beyond ex-

pectation, and I will conclude with adding, Is it not to be deeply regretted, that in these times when the human mind is so fluctuating and sceptical, any person should adopt a system of reasoning so exceptionable, which so mutilates the doctrines of the gospel, and in its consequences, is so inimical to the cross of Christ. Surely, this was not the only, nor the true, resource of demonstrating, that *Whoso keepeth the law, happy is he.* Let us take heed to ourselves and our doctrine, contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and may God bless our labors with abundant success. I am, —.

ORDINATION.

ORDAINED, ON Wednesday the 14, ult. in the second society in Preston, the Rev. HORATIO WALDO. The introductory prayer was given, by the Rev. Samuel Nott, of Franklin ; the sermon, by the Rev. Daniel Waldo, of Suffield ; the consecrating prayer, by the Rev. Dr. Benedict, of Plainfield ; the charge by the Rev. Dr. Strong, of Norwich ; the right hand of Fellowship, by the Rev. Lemuel Tyler, of Preston ; and the concluding prayer, by the Rev. Jonathan Murdock, of Bozrah. The deep and solemn attention, of a very crowded assembly, marked the peculiar interest they felt on the occasion, and their approbation of the public exercises. The music was conducted with great propriety, and by its performance, rendered highly devotional, animating and pleasing to the audience.